

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 SAM-01 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-05 /072 W

----- 024915

R 281259Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6972

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE JERUSALEM 0718

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, JO, XF

SUBJ: WEST BANK REACTION TO SUSPENSION OF STEP-BY-STEP
NEGOTIATIONS

REF: JERUSALEM 0580

1. AS ALWAYS LOCAL ARAB POPULATION HAS HAD MIXED FEELINGS. CLEARLY PREDOMINANT, HOWEVER, IS RELIEF AND SATISFACTION. AS WE HAVE REPORTED, STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS WAS SEEN WITH MISGIVINGS BY WEST BANKERS, WHO FEARED IT WOULD SETTLE EVERYONE ELSE'S PROBLEM AND LEAVE THEM HIGH AND DRY WITH THEIRS. THEY NOW SEE EGYPT AS HAVING RETURNED TO THE FOLD, REINSTITUTING SOLID ARAB FRONT. WHILE THEY ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT CHANCES FOR SUCCESS AT GENEVA, THEY BELIEVE THEIR CAUSE WILL AT LEAST BE INTEGRATED THERE WITH ARAB CAUSE GENERALLY.

2. SATISFACTION IS SLIGHTLY DAMPENED BY REALIZATION THAT PROGRESS TOWARD SETTLEMENT HAS BEEN AT BEST INTERRUPTED AND THAT TENSION AND POSSIBLE WAR LIE AHEAD. MOST SEE THIS AS
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INEVITABLE IN ANY CASE. IF U.S. CANNOT FORCE ISRAEL TO

WITHDRAW, AS SEEMED TO THEM EVIDENT IN RECENT NEGOTIATION, ONLY ARAB RECOURSE IS FURTHER USE OF THEIR OWN POWER. MORE SERIOUS IMMEDIATE CONCERN IS CONVICTION THAT ISRAEL WILL NOW PROCEED MORE RAPIDLY WITH CREEPING ANNEXATION OF WEST BANK.

3. COMMENT: IN ADDITION TO SPECIFIC REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS, WE SENSE INCREASE IN GENERALIZED BITTERNESS TOWARD ISRAELIS. I HAVE HEARD SEVERAL STATEMENTS RECENTLY FROM LEADING ARABS THAT FOR SOME TIME AFTER ANY SETTLEMENT NO ISRAELI WOULD BE SAFE ON WEST BANK IN ABSENCE OF ISRAELI ARMY CONTROL THERE. THE PREDICTION THAT ISRAEL IS DOOMED BY ITS OWN CHARACTER AND ADAMANCY ALSO CROPS UP MORE. ARABS MAY HAVE FELT THIS WAY BEFORE BUT THEY ARE NOW BEING MORE VOCAL ABOUT IT.
DAY

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